Amount Paid to "SAHMAT" and other Cultural Organisations

2568. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what amount has been given to 'SAHMAT' a cultural organisation, Naya Theatre, the Sangeet Natak Akademi and Zonal Cultural Centres by his Ministry, as grant-in-aid or subsidy, or project-based grant or performance fee; and

(b) the year-wise and head-wise details for the last five years?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Steps to promote agriculture in tribal areas

2569. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps are being taken to promote agriculture in the tribal areas, particularly the scheduled areas; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken in that regard during 1996-97 in the tribal areas of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) Economic betterment is an important consideration in the formulation of agricultural development programmes. Specific schemes implemented by Government which help people from the tribal areas include:—

1. Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation areas in North Eastern Region.

2. Assistance to Co-operatives for Weaker Sections.

Transport subsidy on Seeds for North-Eastern States and Sikkim.

Special Scheme for STs/SCs for share capital contribution and managerial assistance for credit co-operative societies.

Measures have also been taken to ensure that specific benefits flow to SC/ST farmers and other weaker sections under other production oriented programmes implemented by the Government. In the case of area development programme, efforts are made to identify those areas for development which have a predominent proportion of SC/ST population.

A list of important schemes, under which benefits flow to the SC/ST population together with total expenditure during 1992—96 is annexed as statement (*See* below). In addition, extension services are provided for SC/ST farmers.

The schemes benefit the farmers both directly and indirectly. Direct schemes include crop oriented schemes, co-operatives for weaker sections, subsidy on transportations of seeds, promotion of fertilizers etc. Indirect benefits accrue from schemes for development of infrastructure to tribal areas.

Allocation of funds out of Central assistance is made by the States themselves. The states have been advised to provide atleast 22.5% funds to SC/ST population in respect of most schemes.